The following characteristics from 1,839 pre-surveys exemplify that YIP programs are serving a higher-risk youth population overall as compared to Minnesota mainstream students:

- Over half (53%) of YIP participants surveyed self identify as being of minority race and/or ethnicity as compared to one quarter (24%) of the mainstream 9th grade Minnesota Student Survey population.
- Half (50%) of YIP participants surveyed report receiving Free or Reduced Priced Lunch as compared to 28 percent of the mainstream 9th grade Minnesota Student Survey population.
- 4 in 10 (42%) of YIP participants surveyed report living with only their mother or father as compared to fewer than 2 in 10 (19%) of the 9th grade Minnesota Student Survey population.
- YIP participants surveyed report lower abstinence rates related to tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and other drug use in the past 30 days as compared to the mainstream 9th grade Minnesota Student Survey population.
- Three in 10 (31%) of YIP participants surveyed report skipping class in the past month and one-quarter (25%) report cutting a least one full day of school.
- YIP participants surveyed reported greater emotional stress than the 9th grade Minnesota Student Survey population. Thirty percent reported feeling angry or irritable (vs. 26%); 22 percent report feeling sad or depressed (vs. 18%); 50 percent agreed they act before they think (vs. 42%); and 36 percent agreed to feeling under pressure or stress (vs. 26%).